

Environment & Climate News

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The Monthly Newspaper For Common-Sense Environmentalists

Vol 7 No 5 June 2004

Alaska Bucks Feds, Invites More Oil Production



Alaska Governor Frank H. Murkowski (R) supports opening the National Petroleum Reserve and other lands in the state to oil and gas drilling.

KRT

Support for resource recovery also fuels campaigns in Lower 48

by James M. Taylor

Tired of the federal government hampering its economy by prohibiting natural resource recovery from federal lands located in the state, the Alaskan state government has

taken matters into its own hands and opened more of its non-federal lands to oil and gas recovery.

ANWR Region Newly Opened

On March 31, the state announced it will

offer 350,000 acres of new offshore leases for oil and gas recovery in an area adjacent to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). While not likely to be as productive as potential ANWR sites, the state-owned land adjacent to the

Refuge is an economically viable location for resource recovery and will offset some of the economic burden caused by the U.S. Senate's decision to block recovery of ANWR's rich natural resources.

ALASKA p. 18

Rhode Island Governor Favors Energy Choice

by James M. Taylor

Like many of his colleagues across the nation, Rhode Island Governor Don Carcieri (R) would like to cut greenhouse gas emissions and encourage the use of renewable energy sources in his state.

Unlike most of his colleagues in the

RHODE ISLAND p. 14

Experts Decry Eco-Imperialism on Earth Day

by Paul Driessen

"Safeguarding environmental values is essential," Niger Innis, national spokesman for the Congress of Racial Equality, told journalists and others attending an Earth Day discussion April 22 at the National Press Club. "But we

EXPERTS p. 16

Junk Science Pervades California "Biomonitoring" Effort

by Diane Carol Bast

On May 10, the California Senate Appropriations Committee heard testimony on the "Healthy Californians Biomonitoring Program," introduced in February by State Sen. Deborah Ortiz (D-Sacramento).

The bill was approved by the Senate Environmental Quality Committee on April 27 and the Senate Health and Human Services Committee on March 24.

The measure, S.B. 1168, would require the Division of Environmental and Occupational Disease Control, part of the state Department of Health Services, to establish a system for monitoring chemicals in the bodies and breast milk of Californians. By June 2006, the system would be implemented in three test communities. The program would expand to include additional communities by 2008.

CALIFORNIA p. 5

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EARTH TRACK



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BIOTECH

Biotech Food Is Safe, Widely Used

by Henry I. Miller

Anti-biotechnology activists claimed recently that “genetically modified” material, albeit in minuscule amounts, has moved into and thereby “contaminates” conventionally produced seed supplies.

As usual, they're way off base. In fact, the “contamination” is more like finding Lexus parts in your Yugo.

It's not surprising the activists' claims are misleading. They're intended to be. These findings—which have not been reported in any journal—come from the analysis of samples unscientifically selected by the same environmental extremists who for years have opposed products ranging from environment-friendly crop plants to improved rabies vaccines.

The latest claims are a continuation of activists' efforts to disparage and discredit a superior, proven, safe technology that just doesn't fit their view of “good” research and development.

Time-Tested Technology

Genetic modification is not new. Virtually all of the 200 major crops in the United States have been “genetically engineered,” or genetically improved, in some way. Plant breeders—not Mother Nature—gave us seedless grapes and watermelons, the tangelo (a tangerine-grapefruit hybrid), and fungus-resistant strawberries. In North American and European diets, only fish and wild game and berries may be said not to have been genetically engineered in some fashion.

Even if “genetic engineering” is used to mean only gene-splicing, the most precise and predictable molecular techniques used for genetic improvement—which, inexplicably, is the only target of the activists—the movement of seeds or genes crafted with these techniques is incidental and hardly “contamination.”

Gene flow is ubiquitous. All crop plants have relatives somewhere, and some gene flow commonly occurs if the two populations are grown close together. Because gene transfer is an age-old concern for farmers, they have developed strategies for preventing

pollen cross-contamination in the field—when and if it is necessary for commercial reasons.

A good example is canola, the genetically improved rapeseed developed by Canadian plant breeders a half-century ago. The original rapeseed oil was harmful when ingested because it contained high levels of erucic acid. After conventional plant breeding led to the development of rapeseed varieties with low concentrations of erucic acid, canola oil became the most commonly consumed oil in Canada.

But because high-erucic acid rapeseed oil is still used as a lubricant and plasticizer, the high- and low-erucic acid varieties of rapeseed plants must be carefully segregated in the field and

**“In North American
and European diets,
only fish and wild game
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genetically engineered
in some fashion.”**

thereafter, and the final products must meet certain tolerances.

These applications of conventional biotechnology, or genetic engineering, represent monumental scientific, technological, commercial, and humanitarian successes. Genetic engineering was responsible for the Green Revolution, whose highly productive dwarf wheat varieties have prevented widespread starvation and malnutrition in the developing world.

State-of-the-Art

But the techniques employed then were relatively crude, and recently they have been supplemented by “the new biotechnology,” a set of enabling techniques that make possible genetic modification at the molecular level. The prototype of these techniques, gene-splicing, is a more precise, better understood, and more predictable method for altering genetic material than was possible previously.

An authoritative 1989 analysis of genetic technologies by the U.S. National Research Council summarized the scientific consensus about the new methods:

“With classical techniques of gene transfer, a variable number of genes can be transferred, the number depending on the mechanism of transfer; but predicting the precise number or the traits that have been transferred is difficult, and we cannot always predict the [traits] that will result. With organisms modified by molecular methods, we are in a better, if not perfect, position to predict [their traits].”

Since at least 1999, gene-spliced plants have been grown worldwide on more than 100 million acres annually, and the benefits include enhanced yields, decreased use of chemical pesticides, and reduced soil erosion.

More than two-thirds of processed foods in American supermarkets contain ingredients derived from gene-spliced organisms—mostly high-fructose corn syrup from gene-spliced corn and derivatives of gene-spliced soybeans.

That means Americans collectively have consumed more than a trillion servings of foods with gene-spliced ingredients—without a single mishap that resulted in injury to a single person or ecosystem.

Gene-splicing represents the state-of-the-art on the continuum of genetic improvement. Its use is cause for celebration, not condemnation.

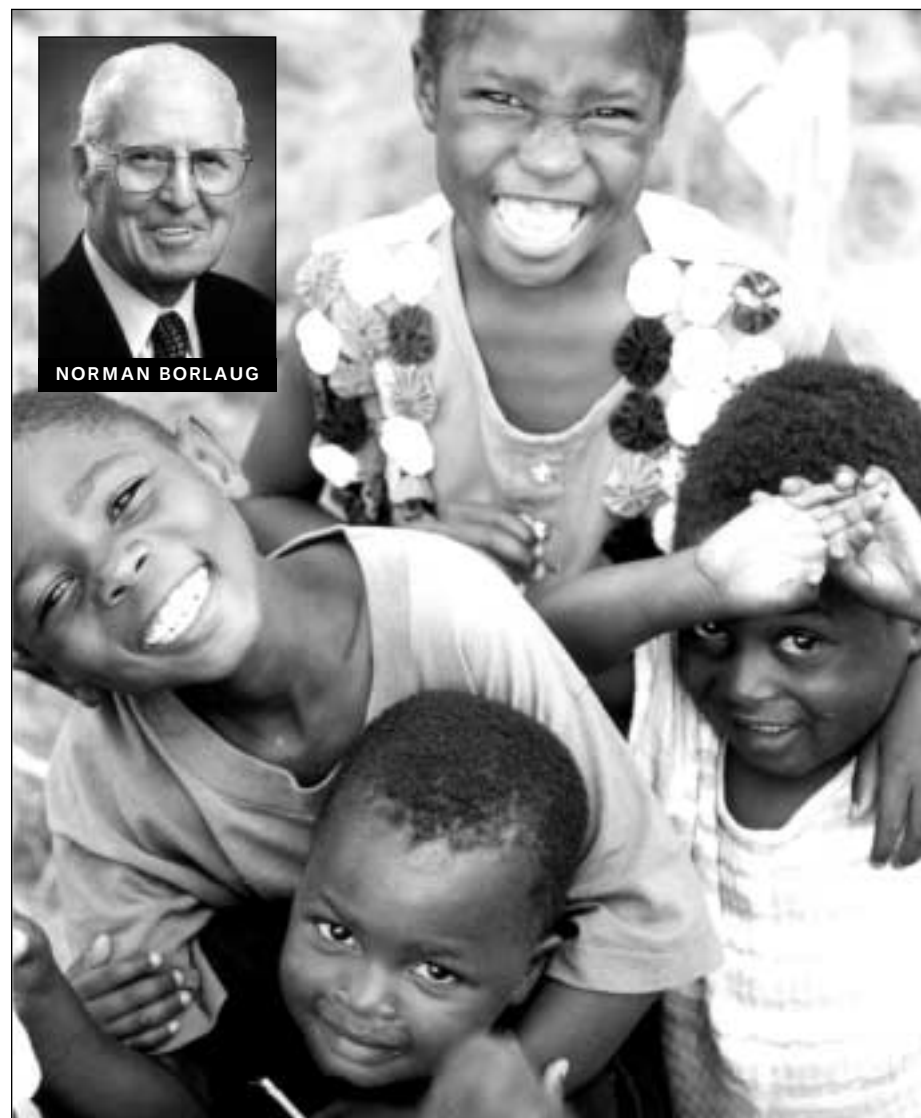
Henry I. Miller, a fellow at the Hoover Institution, headed the FDA's Office of Biotechnology from 1989-1993. His email address is miller@hoover.stanford.edu.

INTERNET INFO

The Heartland Institute's *PolicyBot™* research database offers more than 70 documents on genetic modification and biotech in agriculture. Point your Web browser to <http://www.heartland.org/PolicyBotTopic.cfm?artTopic=346>.



Founder of "Green Revolution" Lauds GM Crops



NORMAN BORLAUG

"Without the proper use of chemical fertilizer, millions would have starved to death—hundreds of millions."

NORMAN BORLAUG

by James M. Taylor

Norman Borlaug, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970 for launching the "Green Revolution" in agriculture that helped curb world hunger, appeared on National Public Radio March 26 to laud genetic modification in agriculture and caution against the organic farming movement.

According to Borlaug, strict adherence to organic farming methods will result in more land being cultivated to produce fewer and less-nutritious crops. Borlaug said extremists within the environmental movement have hijacked the cause and promote policies that lead to human misery.

"Without the proper use of chemical fertilizer, millions would have starved to death—hundreds of millions," Borlaug told NPR listeners. "There's a big confusion [about my views]. I have always said use all the organic fertilizer that's available, but please don't have the extreme greenies come to the developing nations and tell their agriculture leaders that it's simple, all they have to do is use the organic fertilizer and they can change production. This is nonsense.

"People who are carrying these extreme ideas have never been involved in production," added Borlaug. "They're looking at it very often from a theoretical standpoint, not from a realistic one. Had we tried to produce the food of the year 2000 with the tech-

nology of 1960, we would have had to have much more than double the area under cultivation, which would have meant cutting down forests, plowing up lands that were marginal because of rainfall and would never have had sustainable production. So what would have happened to wildlife?"

Borlaug emphasized the benefits of gene-splicing technology. "The proper use of genetically modified crops opens the door to using genes that can be useful in other distant taxonomic groups from the animal kingdom. But there's just a lot of confusion going on, and unfortunately the general public is poorly informed on these things. We can't produce the food the world needs now without the use of modern technology."

Added Borlaug, "Remember, ... when I was born 90 years ago, the world population was about 1.3 billion people. Today we're 6.3 billion, and we're adding 80 million more a year. And without the use of high-yield technology, we would have chopped down all of our forest, destroyed our wildlife, much of the beauties of nature that people who have good incomes can use during vacations to see the wonders of nature. I'm a firm believer in that."

James M. Taylor is managing editor of Environment & Climate News. His email address is taylor@heartland.org.

UN Report Says GM Crops Necessary to Conserve Water

A new report released at a United Nations development summit in New York on April 20 warns food production and agriculture are causing the rapid depletion of water resources across the world. The report's authors advocate the cultivation of drought-resistant and genetically modified crops to combat the crisis.

"Food and agriculture are by far the largest consumers of water. They require 1,000 times more than we use to drink and 100 times more than we use to meet basic personal needs," cautions the report, titled "Water—More Nutrition Per Drop," initiated by the Swedish government.

Focusing on the estimated 840 million undernourished people across the world, the report warns that if measures are not taken to increase food production while subsequently using less water, the international community will face great difficulties in meeting the UN Millennium Development Goal of halving the number of undernourished people in the world by 2015.

Agriculture accounts for an alarming 70 to 90 percent of available freshwater supplies in developing countries, according to senior scientist Malin Falkenmark of the Stockholm

International Water Institute, which collaborated on the report. Falkenmark adds that astonishingly huge volumes of water are transformed into vapor during food production.

The report explains that with globalization and an increase in purchasing power, consumers are becoming more selective about their food, driving an increasing demand for meat and dairy products that involve water-intensive production procedures.

Stressing that the conservation of water should be a combined global effort, the report advocates the cultivation and export of crops in regions where they can give the best yield with the least amount of water.

Source: Wisconsin Ag Connection, <http://www.wisconsinagconnection.com>.

INTERNET INFO

The "Water—More Nutrition Per Drop" report is available online at http://www.siwi.org/downloads/More_Nutrition_Per_Drop.pdf.

Nature Reports GM Bacterium Could Help Fight Cancer

by James M. Taylor

A genetically modified bacterium may offer substantial hope in the battle against cancer, according to a study published in *Gene Therapy* and reported April 22 in *Nature* magazine (<http://www.nature.com/nsu/040419/040419-9.html>).

Researchers at London's Hammersmith Hospital genetically modified *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*), a bacterium that often causes food poisoning in humans. After modifying the bacterium, the researchers injected it into mouse tumors and reported startling results. The modified bacterium primed the tumor to accept anti-cancer drugs in a very targeted way, killing the tumor but leaving healthy surrounding cells unaffected.

According to *Nature*, "The treatment killed cancer cells in the area where the drug had been activated and left surrounding tissue unharmed. Three weeks later the tumours had shrunk by up to two-thirds and most of the remaining cells were dead."

Added *Nature*, "Such a targeted effect is an improvement on standard chemotherapy treatments, which can damage healthy as well as cancerous tissue."

The bacterium appeared most promising in isolating cancer in its early stages and preventing its spread to other parts of the body. The bacterium also could be used to reduce cancerous growths before surgery to remove them, and to prevent cancer recurrences.

Prior to the study, researchers added two foreign genes to the *E. coli* bacterium. One of the genes, called "inv," spurs the *E. coli* bacterium to make a protein that penetrates human cell walls. The other gene, called "hly," assists *E. coli* in releasing an enzyme that fights the targeted tumor.

"Genetically engineered bacteria could help fight cancer," summarized *Nature* author Helen Pilcher.

James M. Taylor is managing editor of Environment & Climate News. His email address is taylor@heartland.org.

California

Continued from page 1

"Biomonitoring is the next logical, critical step for us to take in addressing threats to public health," said Ortiz, who chairs the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. "It is my hope that this research can lead to more deliberate decision-making as we tackle chronic diseases and cancers that are pervasively and frighteningly invading our families and personal lives."

Radical Supporters

Though Ortiz authored S.B. 1168 and describes it in public health terms, the real muscle behind the measure comes from a coalition of anti-chemical environmental activist groups dubbing themselves the California Body Burden Campaign (CalBBC).

Among the coalition's members is The National Environmental Trust (NET), which once sought a ban on chemicals used in the production of rubber ducks and other plastic toys. In February 2003 the Consumer Products Safety Commission unanimously voted to dismiss NET's

claims as unfounded.

Joining NET in its support for the Ortiz measure are, among others, the California Environmental Rights Alliance, Californians for Pesticide Reform, Earth Island/International Marine Mammal Project, Environmental Justice and Health Union, Environmental Working Group, National Resources Defense Council, Pesticide Action Network, and San Francisco Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility.

Several labor unions, including the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, Palo Alto Education Association, and United Steelworkers of America, also support the bill.

The bill's provision for a "Community Representative Committee" makes apparent the anti-chemical bias that underlies the effort. By law, the committee's eight members must represent: a breast cancer awareness organization; an organization with a focus on environmental health; an organization with a focus on environmental justice; an organization with a focus on child environmental health; an organization promoting breastfeeding; a labor organization; a private industry "with a verifiable and consistent commitment to sustainable core business practices that reduce environmental toxins"; and a public health organization.

Nothing More than a Scare Tactic

According to CalBBC, the Ortiz bill would create the first ever statewide biomonitoring program to measure "pollution in people."

Junk science watchdog Steven Milloy, however, says the bill's real purpose "is simply to scare people, thereby building political pressure to have various chemicals banned—along with the many useful and lifesaving products made from them." Milloy commented on the Ortiz bill in an April 30 "Views" essay for

FoxNews.com.

Milloy, publisher of JunkScience.com and author of the Cato Institute book *Junk Science Judo: Self-Defense Against Health Scares and Scams*, noted the legislative rationale for Ortiz's proposal, outlined in the bill's "declarations" section, consists of "two distinct observations that have no demonstrable relationship between them, despite decades and billions of dollars of research."

The bill's declarations point out that (a) an estimated 125 million Americans have at least one chronic health condition and (b) there are an estimated 85,000 synthetic chemicals registered for use in the U.S., with another 2,000 added each year.

Noted Milloy, "there's no basis in any fact for assuming that the chemicals and other substances we are exposed to in the course of ordinary daily lives play any role in the onset of chronic disease."

"People can suffer from chronic disease for many reasons," Milloy continued, "including genetics, poor diet, smoking, overconsumption of alcohol, lack of exercise, and lack of adequate health care. The cause or causes of many chronic diseases are simply a mystery."

Tracing Toxins

"We know trace levels of many chemicals and other substances can be detected in the body," noted Milloy. "But so what? While all substances may be toxic, they're only toxic when exposures to them are sufficiently high."

A report released in April 2003 by the American Council on Science and Health (ACSH) confirmed Milloy's skepticism.

"Americans are constantly being bombarded with warnings about dire health consequences from traces of environmental chemicals," explained ACSH President Dr. Elizabeth Whelan at the time of the report's release. "But many of these warnings simply relate to evidence of exposure, not to any demonstrated adverse effects on health. Merely because a substance can be detected does not mean that it poses any real risk to health. Indeed, there are almost no studies documenting an adverse human health effect due to trace levels of chemicals."

In March 2003, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued its *Second National Report on Human Exposure to Environmental Chemicals*. The authors noted, "The measurement of an environmental chemical in a person's blood or urine does not by itself mean that the chemical causes disease. Advances in analytical methods allow us to measure lower and lower levels of environmental chemicals in people. Separate studies of varying exposure levels and health effects are required to determine which blood and urine levels are safe and which result in disease."

Natural Chemicals Abound

Scientists also point out that anti-chemical measures like Ortiz's widely miss their target. "The focus of regulatory policy is on synthetic chemicals," noted Dr. Bruce N. Ames, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology at the University of California - Berkeley. "But 99.9 percent of the chemicals humans ingest are natural."

"The 85,000 man-made chemicals

referred to in Sen. Ortiz's bill," noted Milloy, "pale in comparison to the more than 20 million natural chemical compounds, many of which can be quite toxic at relatively low doses."

High Price to Pay

The Ortiz measure seeks a start-up appropriation of \$1.5 million from the General Fund as a "loan" to the Department of Health Services. The loan must be repaid from, and all operating expenses covered by, a biomonitoring fund that will collect fees assessed on manufacturers, importers, and distributors of more than 50 chemicals identified in the bill.

The measure prohibits the California Environmental Protection Agency, under whose auspices the biomonitoring program operates, from collecting more than \$10 million in fees annually—although yearly adjustments to reflect changes in the consumer price index are permitted and a triennial review to determine appropriate fee levels is called for.

The state's business community has not responded positively to the proposed fee mandate.

"Any time you add to the cost of doing business in California, you are forcing many small business owners to do things that are bad for the economy: cutting back on benefits, cutting back on full-time jobs, not expanding employment in the state," warned Martyn B. Hopper, California state director for the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB).

"These mandates—health insurance, biomonitoring—may be good concepts. But once government starts tying firms up in regulation, you make California a very uncompetitive place to do business."

Diane Carol Bast is vice president of The Heartland Institute and editor of Environment & Climate News. Her email address is dbast@heartland.org.

INTERNET INFO

The text of S.B. 1168, the Healthy Californians Biomonitoring Program, is available through The Heartland Institute's free *PolicyBot™* research database. Point your Web browser to <http://www.heartland.org>, click on the *PolicyBot™* button, and search for document #14945.

"Traces of Environmental Chemicals in the Human Body: Are They a Risk to Health?" the May 2003 report issued by the American Council on Science and Health, is also available through *PolicyBot™*. Search for document #12321.

The six-page executive summary of the Centers for Disease Control's *Second National Report on Human Exposure to Environmental Chemicals* is available through *PolicyBot™*. Search for document #14946. The 250-page full text and additional information about the report are available from the CDC Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/exposurereport/default.htm>.



On May 10, the California Senate Appropriations Committee heard testimony on the "Healthy Californians Biomonitoring Program," introduced in February by State Sen. Deborah Ortiz (D-Sacramento).

GLOBAL SATELLITE TEMPERATURES

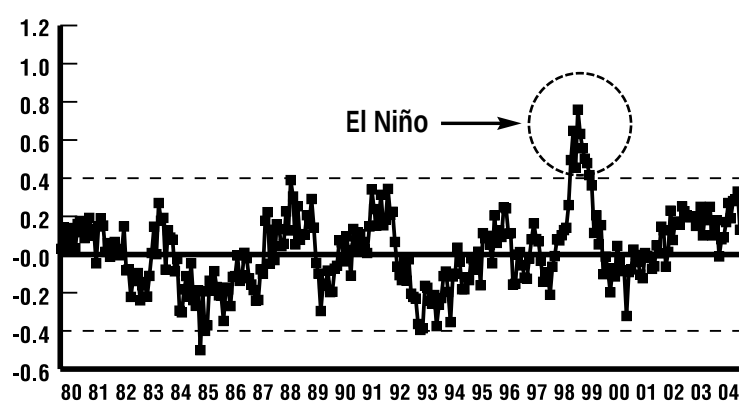
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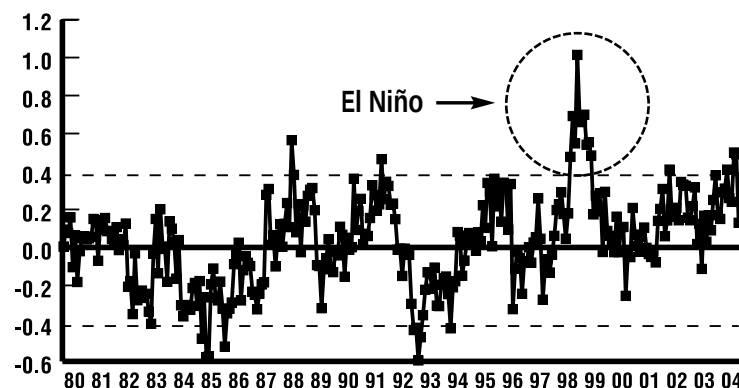
APRIL 2004

The global average temperature (*top*) for April was 0.13°C above normal.
The Northern Hemisphere's temperature (*middle*) was 0.13°C above normal.
The Southern Hemisphere's temperature (*bottom*) was 0.12°C above normal.

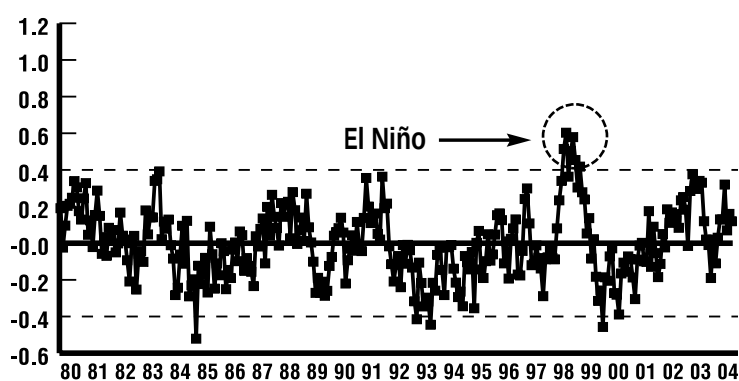
GLOBAL AVERAGE



NORTHERN HEMISPHERE



SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE



Each month, Earth Track updates the global averaged satellite measurements of the Earth's temperature. These numbers are important because they are real—not projections, forecasts, or guesses. Global satellite measurements are made from a series of orbiting platforms that sense the average temperature in various atmospheric layers. Here, we present the lowest level, which climate models say should be warming. The satellite measurements are considered accurate to within 0.01°C. The data used to create these graphs can be found on the Internet at http://vortex.nsstc.uah.edu/data/msu/t2lt/tltghmam_5.1.

Iowa Governor Vetoes Livestock Emissions Bill

by James M. Taylor

Landmark legislation that would have set air pollution limits for Iowa hog and cattle farms was dealt a severe setback on April 13 when Governor Tom Vilsack (D) vetoed a bill that had cleared the Iowa legislature.

House File 2523 was compromise legislation that would have enacted Iowa's first state-level livestock air standards. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Sandy Greiner (R-Keota), would have reaffirmed federal environmental standards while mandating a comprehensive scientific study of emissions from hog farms and other livestock containment locations. The federal standards, based on the most current science, set hydrogen sulfide and ammonia caps based on levels recommended by the Agency for Toxic Substances of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

Upon completion of a comprehensive examination of farm pollutants, the bill would have authorized whatever additional steps might be necessary to address evidence of human health or environmental concerns. Importantly, the bill would have authorized regulations more stringent than federal standards if scientific evidence suggested benefits to



On April 13, Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack (D) vetoed a bill that would have set air pollution limits for Iowa hog and cattle farms.

out justification.

"Livestock is important to Iowa's economy," said Perdue. "We can't afford to lose this industry. When it comes to making regulations, they need to be fair for everyone involved."

Iowa Farm Bureau President Craig Lang called the veto a "missed opportunity" to make environmental progress without unnecessarily punishing Iowa's

"Legislators worked hard this session to establish air quality standards consistent with numbers proposed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Yet, with a stroke of the pen, Governor Vilsack closed the door on an opportunity to move Iowa forward."

CRAIG LANG, IOWA FARM BUREAU

such an approach.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources lobbied against the bill, recommending the state enact stiff regulations now and study the evidence later. Last year, the DNR had proposed "shoot now, ask later" regulations that were widely criticized as giving too much credence to subjective reporting of health symptoms, and not enough to scientific health data. The Iowa legislature barred implementation of the DNR-recommended restrictions.

Greiner, whose family farm competes against larger operations that emit the most pollutants, expressed regret at the governor's veto. "I thought that, OK, here's somebody that doesn't have any politics to play here and these numbers are going to be something that everybody can buy into."

Pottawattamie farmer Chris Perdue warned oppressive environmental restrictions without a scientific basis would force many farmers out of business with-

most important business.

"Legislators worked hard this session to establish air quality standards consistent with numbers proposed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Yet, with a stroke of the pen, Governor Vilsack closed the door on an opportunity to move Iowa forward."

Mike Triplett of the Iowa Association of Business and Industry pointed out during a March 8 public hearing that all Iowa farms would have been required to meet all applicable federal standards while the proposed study was underway, and that conflicting interim standards would do more harm than good.

"It is crucial that [farmers] do not face conflicting interpretations between EPA and DNR," said Triplett. "Our state needs to be in a position where businesses and their employees can thrive."

James M. Taylor is managing editor of Environment & Climate News. His email address is taylor@heartland.org.

Smokers and Businesses Oppose Beach Smoking Bans

by James M. Taylor

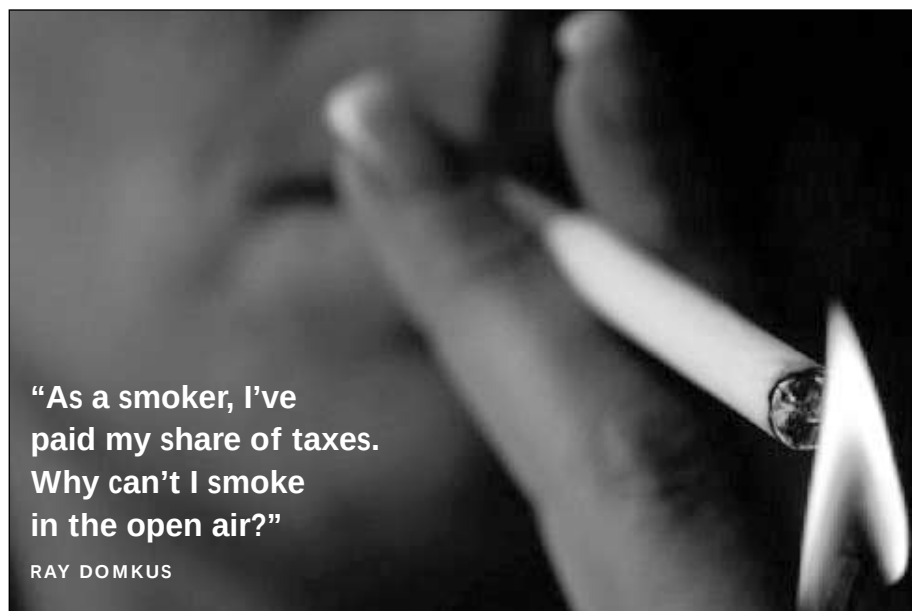
When anti-smoking activists pushed to ban smoking in workplaces, and then in restaurants, and now even in bars, supporters of freedom of choice warned the alleged health risk to non-smokers was merely a smokescreen for activists to build momentum to ban the use of all tobacco products, anywhere and at any time. Now, their warnings appear to be ringing true, as Los Angeles and other communities are pushing to ban smoking on open-air public beaches.

In early April, the 15-member Los Angeles city council indicated it would impose the ban before the summer beach season.

"[Smoking is] disgusting, inexcusable, and hopefully soon it will be illegal," said Los Angeles Councilman Jack Weiss.

Realizing even the most biased studies find no health threats to non-smokers from people smoking in such expansive open-air places as beaches, anti-smoking activists have invented other justifications for the proposed beach ban. Weiss, who drafted the bill, said he was inspired to craft the legislation after "spending hours on my hands and knees" picking up cigarette butts on area beaches.

Some observers are skeptical of Weiss' beach-cleaning efforts. "Let's think about who is paying the taxes for these beaches," said Ray Domkus, a spokesman for the California branch of the interna-



"As a smoker, I've paid my share of taxes. Why can't I smoke in the open air?"

RAY DOMKUS

tional smokers' rights group FORCES. "As a smoker, I've paid my share of taxes. Why can't I smoke in the open air? The argument is usually the trash, which smokers can be pretty poor about. But what about all the dirty diapers, cans, and papers that accumulate? If you're going to ban smoking, why not ban everything else?"

Smoking bans also have economic consequences. Local businessman Mike Vasko explained to Reuters news service, "If they stop the smoking on the beach

the people would not go, believe me. Lots of people from Europe and Asia—everybody—they smoke. What I hear from them is they cannot go there anymore [if a smoking ban is enacted]. There's no way to smoke. That's the point. Los Angeles will lose business. Lots of business."

A survey conducted by International Communications Research (ICR) found 76 percent of New York City bars and nightclubs have had a 30 percent decrease in customers, and 34 percent have had to lay off workers as a result

of the city's recently imposed ban on smoking in bars. The ICR study confirmed similar findings from an earlier study conducted by the New York City chapter of the New York State Restaurant Association.

Nick Jones, owner of Soho House in both New York and London, reports his New York customers are unhappy with the smoking ban. "It removes choice and I think that if you talk to a lot of people, even people who don't smoke, they think that the ban is wrong in New York. It is quite a dictatorial way of dealing with a problem."

"Bartenders and owners are suffering significant economic losses as a result of the ban. Some estimates are as high as a 30 percent loss in takings," said David Rabin, president of the New York Nightlife Association. "Another big problem is increased noise from smokers on the streets, leading to calls not to grant further liquor licenses for new venues. The ban is disrupting the entire economic, social, and entrepreneurial life of New York."

Los Angeles' hospitality industry, one of the most important components of the area economy, predicts similar hardships if the city council enacts a beach smoking ban.

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Preserving the American Dream Conference a Great Success



by Randal O'Toole

On April 16, about 70 participants in the 2004 Preserving the American Dream Conference toured Portland and visited nine high-density housing sites. These ranged from a small group of "skinny houses"—single-family homes 15 feet wide on 25x100-foot lots—to giant transit-oriented developments.

In many cases, the transit-oriented developments could more realistically be called transit-oriented disasters. Tour leaders John Charles and Michael Barton, of the Cascade Policy Institute, showed that one development, Beaverton Creek, was supposed to have ground-floor shops with three stories of apartments above. But with limited parking for shoppers, only three of the shops were ever rented. Two have since gone out of business or moved, leaving just one hair salon surrounded by dozens of vacant shops.

Another development, Beaverton Round, was left vacant for years after the original developer went bankrupt because no one would risk money financing a development with inadequate parking. The development is now open, but only after a new developer convinced the city to allow it to include hundreds of additional parking spaces.

At many stops, Portland activist Jim Karlock (<http://www.saveportland.org>) produced city records showing the tax abatements received by various properties. "This townhome recently sold for more than \$1.5 million," he said of a downtown property, "and the owner pays only \$150 a year in taxes." Karlock has documented more

than \$80 million in tax exemptions and other subsidies in Portland alone ... and that doesn't count many improvements made by the city to support development.

"Many people told me how beautiful Portland was," said Owen McShane, who came to the conference from New Zealand, "and I wondered if smart growth had anything to do with that. Now I see that these smart-growth developments are often ugly and shoddy, not to mention dysfunctional."

Alternative Visions

Friday evening some 100 people heard a set of alternative visions provided by U.S. Representative Earl Blumenauer, no-growth advocate Andy Kerr, and free-market advocate John Charles. Blumenauer argued we subsidize the auto industry, so we need to subsidize transit as well. Curiously, he seemed to believe gas taxes paid by highway users were "subsidies" when spent on roads. If true, then transit fares paid by transit users are also subsidies to transit.

Kerr argued such automobile "subsidies" promote growth, and he believes such growth is bad for Oregon and elsewhere. While he was not willing to support all free-market ideas, he could agree with Charles that such subsidies should be eliminated.

The real highlight of the conference came with three presentations Saturday morning. First, South Carolina Representative Joe Neal updated conference participants on how smart-growth advocates are regulating rural black landowners and taking away much of the value of their land.

Second, Kansas City Councilwoman Sandra McFadden-Weaver told the audience that light rail was "ice cream and cake," and that cities should concentrate on providing meat and potatoes before worrying about dessert.

Third, Steven Town, a policeman and architectural liaison in the West Yorkshire, England, Police Department, showed how New Urban "smart growth" in England has resulted in higher crime. New Urbanist demands for mixed uses, maximizing common areas and minimizing private space,



"Many people told me how beautiful Portland was, and I wondered if smart growth had anything to do with that. Now I see that these smart-growth developments are often ugly and shoddy, not to mention dysfunctional."

OWEN MCSHANE

and grid street patterns (as opposed to cul de sacs) led to burglary and other crime rates that were three to seven times the national average in Britain. Town added burglaries virtually ended when common areas were made private and other corrections were made.

More than thirty other presentations followed on Saturday and Sunday, providing much more information about the failings of smart growth and alternative solutions to urban problems. Among them:

■ Tom Rubin showed how rail advocates sometimes distort the numbers to make them seem favorable to rail transit. For example, they focus on "people past a point" when comparing rail to highway numbers, when in reality the highways usually do far more work because they are faster.

■ Robert Behnke described a low-capacity transit system that could take people nearly door to door at much faster speeds than large buses or rail. The system allowed people to call for a transit vehicle and get a response within four minutes. Behnke said the system was tried in San Jose several years ago, but abandoned after six months

because it had more riders than planners had anticipated!

■ Sam Kazman of the Competitive Enterprise Institute (<http://www.cei.org>) played a series of television commercials to show how efforts that focused on the benefits of autos, homeownership, and other aspects of the American dream are more persuasive than efforts that were defensive about the potential costs of those activities.

■ Peter Samuel of *Toll Roads News* (<http://tollroadsnews.com>) showed that, when roads become congested, traffic slows down and road capacities actually decline. The congestion won't end until traffic volumes decline below the new, lower capacity, so it can take hours for congestion to go away. The solution, he said, is to charge tolls that vary by the amount of traffic so that traffic volumes never exceed capacity.

Randal O'Toole is senior economist with the Thoreau Institute (<http://www.ti.org>) and author of The Vanishing Automobile and Other Urban Myths. His email address is rot@ti.org.



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EPA Launches Costly New Smog Standard

by Ben Lieberman

On April 15, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched its new plan to tighten the national ambient air quality standard for smog. Policy experts warn the new rule will do significant economic harm but little environmental good, pointing to EPA's own data to support their argument.

EPA Administrator Michael Leavitt acknowledged there would be substantial compliance costs in the 31 states with areas out of compliance with the new standard, but said the rule change was necessary "to achieve cleaner, healthier air."

Ozone, the primary constituent of smog, is a lung irritant caused by motor vehicle and industrial pollution as well as natural emissions. Smog was perhaps the single biggest reason for the 1970 Clean Air Act, and it has been heavily regulated since that time. EPA's announcement of the new rule gave the public the incorrect impression that the nation's smog problem is worsening. That has not been true for decades. According to EPA, ozone has declined by more than 30 percent since 1970, and by some measures was already falling before the Clean Air Act took effect.

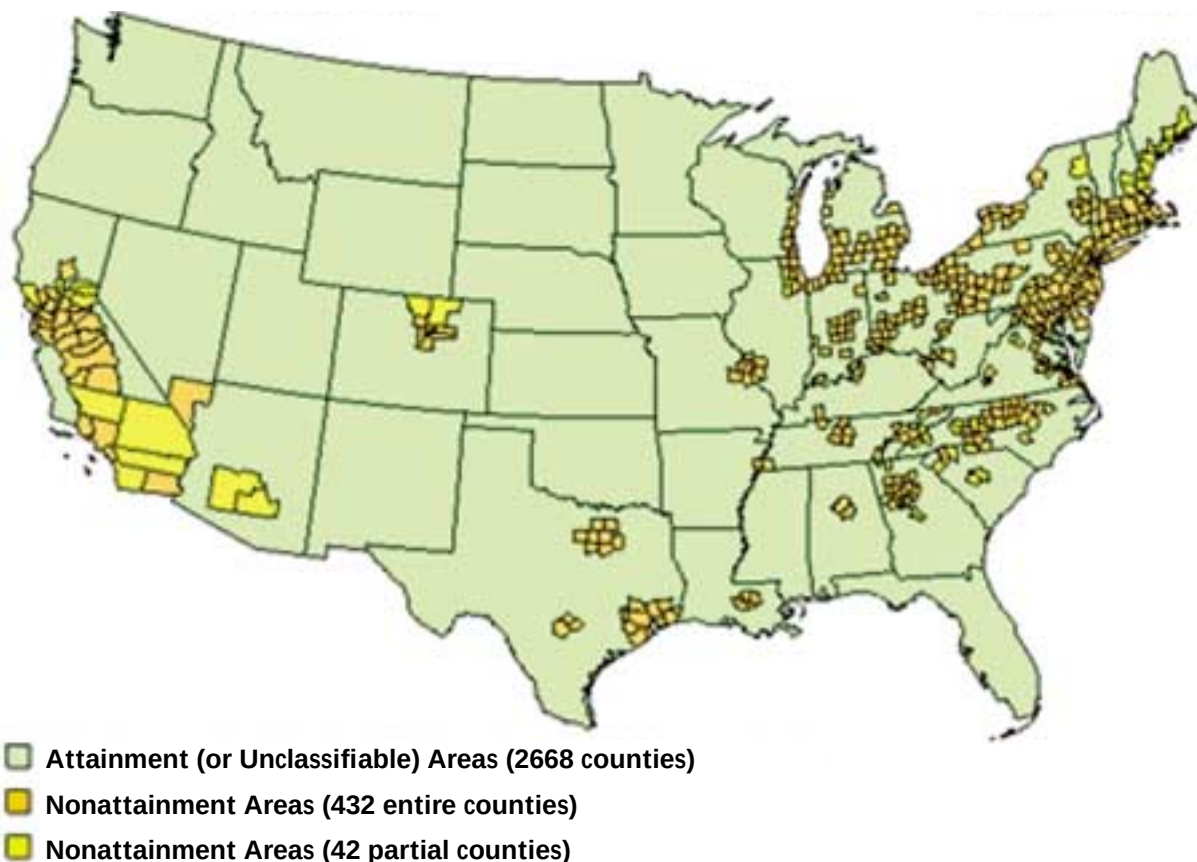
Except for a few areas in California, almost the entire nation is currently in or near compliance with the existing air quality standard for ozone. Due to measures already in the works, including new motor vehicle emissions standards starting with the 2004 model year and new control requirements for power plants, emissions of smog-forming compounds will continue to decline even if no new regulations are implemented. Consequently, those areas not yet in compliance are already on their way toward it.

Merely a "Policy Judgment"

The Clinton administration decided to tighten the ozone standard in 1997. At the time, EPA's Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) concluded the tougher standard would not be "significantly more protective of public health" than the existing standard, deeming the proposed change a "policy judgment." A plurality of CASAC members advocated against making the standard more stringent. EPA's own cost-benefit analysis found the modest marginal benefits of the new rule (mostly from a small hypothetical decline in asthma-related hospital visits) were outweighed by the implementation costs.

The Clinton EPA's ozone rule

Attainment and Nonattainment Areas in the U.S. 8-hour Ozone Standard



source: <http://www.epa.gov/ozonedenignations/nonattainingreen.htm>

sparked an unprecedented amount of critical comment from industry groups, public interest organizations, and members of Congress. Even several federal agencies—including the Departments of Transportation, Commerce, and Energy, as well as the Small Business Administration—disagreed with EPA on key aspects of the rule. Nonetheless, EPA went ahead

Independent researchers have put the price tag much higher. For example, analysts for the Mercatus Center at George Mason University estimate the cost will reach \$80 billion. EPA has designated 474 counties in 31 states as being out of attainment with the new standard. (See map.)

The specific control measures required of these counties will

(SIP) to EPA by 2007. The plans must get EPA approval before they can be implemented, but once implemented they will likely be in effect for many years after that. Failure to meet the compliance deadlines set out by the agency will trigger additional requirements.

The costs of compliance will likely reduce employment, increase traffic congestion, and raise the cost of living in non-attainment areas. Even the battle against high gasoline prices may be affected, since areas violating the new ozone standard may be required to use costly specialized gasoline blends that have proliferated in recent years. And many refiners will now have a more difficult time obtaining approval for much-needed increases in gasoline refining capacity.

The benefits of the new standard may ultimately prove difficult to identify, but the costs will be apparent for years to come.

Ben Lieberman is director of air quality policy with the Competitive Enterprise Institute. His email address is blieberman@cei.org.

"The benefits of the new [ozone] standard may ultimately prove difficult to identify, but the costs will be apparent for years to come."

with the new standard, sparking several years of legal challenges that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court ultimately decided to defer to EPA's judgment, upholding the new standard. However, the lengthy legal delays meant the Clinton administration rule would have to be implemented by its successor. The Bush EPA has now obliged.

Billions of Dollars for Compliance
Leavitt estimates compliance costs of \$50 billion over the next 15 years.

depend on how far out of compliance each one is. Among the possible measures are more stringent requirements for new or substantially modified industrial facilities, restrictions on highway construction projects, measures affecting small businesses, and more onerous motor vehicle emission inspection programs. These measures would be implemented on top of those already in place.

Each of the states with non-attainment areas will be required to submit a State Implementation Plan

GLOBAL WARMING



AP Fumbles Global Warming Story

percent, and 0.93 percent of the atmosphere, respectively. [4]

The sun, not any greenhouse gas, is primarily to “blame” for global warming—and it plays a very key role in global temperature variations as well.

by Amy Ridenour

In late March, the Associated Press ran a global warming story [1] that makes a number of misleading, if not downright inaccurate, statements. Faulty “news” stories like this one, which mislead people all over the world, do not reflect a consensus of scientists. It is alarming that a media outlet as influential as AP would run a story this wrong ... and that so many news editors would be gullible enough to run it.

Carbon Dioxide's Role

The AP story reported: “Carbon dioxide, the gas largely blamed for global warming, has reached record-high levels in the atmosphere after growing at an accelerated pace in the past year ...”

In fact, carbon dioxide (CO₂) is not the major greenhouse gas—water vapor is. [2] The ability of CO₂ to absorb heat is quite limited, and it accounts for less than 10 percent of the greenhouse effect. [3]

Less than 1 percent of the Earth's atmosphere (about 0.03 percent) consists of carbon dioxide. Nitrogen, oxygen, and argon constitute about 78 percent, 20

Mankind's Role

The AP story continued: “Carbon dioxide, mostly from burning of coal, gasoline and other fossil fuels, traps heat that otherwise would radiate into space.” This, too, is untrue. Only about 14 percent of CO₂ in the Earth's atmosphere comes from the burning of fossil fuels. [5]

“Global temperatures increased by about 1 degree Fahrenheit (0.6 degrees Celsius) during the 20th century,” continued the AP story, “and international panels of scientists sponsored by world governments have concluded that most of the warming probably was due to greenhouse gases.”

But most of the observed twentieth century warming occurred in the first few decades of that century [6]—before the widespread burning of fossil fuels and before 82 percent of the increase in atmospheric CO₂ observed in the twentieth century took place. [7]

Moreover, the Earth does not have “world governments.” It doesn't have even one “world government.” The United Nations is not a government, but an asso-

“It is alarming that a media outlet as influential as AP would run a story this wrong ... and that so many news editors would be gullible enough to run it.”

ciation of nations.

If AP is referring to the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), its reporters should do their homework. The IPCC report—the part written by scientists—reached no consensus on climate change. Only the “summary for policymakers,” prepared by political appointees, asserted a link between global temperatures and human activities. [8]

Most reporters quote only the summary, being either too lazy or too undereducated to understand the report itself. And few reporters have bothered to interview the scientists who helped prepare the report. IPCC scientist Dr. Richard Lindzen of the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology says the report is typically “presented as a consensus that involves hundreds, perhaps thousands, of scientists ... and none of them was asked if they agreed with anything in the report except for the one or two pages they worked on.”

Lindzen also draws a sharp distinction between the scientists' document and its politicized summary: “The document itself is informative,” Lindzen says. “The summary is not.” [9]

Amy Ridenour is president of The National Center for Public Policy Research. Her email address is aridenour@nationalcenter.org.

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In addition to the sources cited in the Notes, see: John Carlisle, “Kyoto Cover-up: TV News Gives One-Sided View on Global Warming,” National Center for Public Policy Research, May 2001, <http://www.nationalcenter.org/NPA337.html>.

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[4] Edward Klappenbach, “Examining the Carbon Dioxide in Our Atmosphere,” <http://weather.about.com/cs/atmosphere/aa062003a.htm?terms=carbon+dioxide>, retrieved March 21, 2004. Klappenbach gives the CO₂ figure as .033 percent. Note: The Associated Press article discussed here alludes to an increase in atmospheric carbon

dioxide concentrations as measured at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Mauna Loa Observatory in Hawaii. The average annual percentage of CO₂ in the atmosphere determined by researchers measuring there for 2002 was .0373 percent. A chart showing average annual CO₂ concentrations measured at the Mauna Loa Observatory from 1958-2002 is available at <http://cdiac.esd.ornl.gov/ftp/maunaloa-co2/maunaloa.co2> as of March 22, 2004.

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KYOTO PROTOCOL

EUROPE TO RUSSIA: Ratify Kyoto or Else

*Denial of admission to WTO may be
last-minute threat before Russian decision*

by James M. Taylor

Facing mounting evidence that Russia is prepared to strike a final deathblow to the Kyoto Protocol, European Union (EU) officials have told Russia they might approve or deny the country's admission into the World Trade Organization based on its acceptance or rejection of the global warming treaty.

Entrance into the World Trade Organization (WTO) is expected to aid the Russian economy. Currently, with Russia outside the WTO, EU economic protectionism punishes Russia with severe tariffs and bans on a wide variety of Russian imports. Before 2003, for example, Russia exported at least 5 million tons of grain each year to Europe, but the EU has since shut the door on more than 90 percent of Russia's grain exports.

The WTO does not forbid the EU from taking such actions against non-member nations. Russia's entrance into the WTO would protect it against such predatory economic practices.

"I think the relations between Russia and the European Union will be bad for many years to come [unless Russia gains WTO protection]," said Anders Eslund, a former Swedish diplomat who is an expert on Russia.

"The EU is very protectionist," Eslund emphasized.

Regardless of Russia's desire to enter the WTO, and regardless of the willingness of other WTO nations to admit Russia, the EU holds the trump card: WTO bylaws mandate candidate nations must meet the approval of *all* WTO nations before gaining admission to the economic partnership.

Kyoto an "International Auschwitz"

Russia was expected to decide by the end of May whether it will ratify the Kyoto Protocol. Most observers believe Russian officials will reject the treaty. Although EU officials assert differences with Russia on a variety of economic issues unrelated to Kyoto, they clearly see Russia's decision on the global warming treaty as key to whether they will support the nation's entrance into the WTO.

Nevertheless, the EU may find it dif-

ficult to influence Russia so late in its Kyoto decision-making process. With Russian President Vladimir Putin vowing to make a final decision by May 20, momentum was on the side of those urging him to reject the treaty.

As recently as April 14, Putin's top economic advisor, Andrei Illiaronov, publicly castigated the treaty as a deathblow to the Russian economy.

"The Kyoto Protocol is a death pact, however strange it may sound, because its main aim is to strangle economic growth and economic activity in countries that accept the protocol's requirements," said Illiaronov. "Russia opposes it on the grounds that it will cripple urgently needed economic growth."

Ratifying Kyoto, Illiaronov said, would mean creating international agencies to "limit growth not only on a

"The Kyoto Protocol is a death pact, however strange it may sound, because its main aim is to strangle economic growth and economic activity in countries that accept the protocol's requirements."

ANDREI ILLIARONOV

national level, but also on a supernational level. An organ of legal interference in internal affairs of the country would be created.

"At first we wanted to call this agreement a kind of international Gosplan," he added, referring to the agency that repeatedly created disastrous results in its efforts to run the old Soviet economy. "But then we realized that Gosplan was much more humane and so we ought to call the Kyoto Protocol an international gulag."

"In the gulag, though, you got the same ration daily and it didn't get smaller by the day," said Illiaronov. "In the end we had to call the Kyoto Protocol an international Auschwitz."

Nations accounting for at least 55 percent of total global warming emis-

sions

must ratify the Kyoto Protocol before it can take effect. With several nations, including the United States, already rejecting the Protocol, the fate of the treaty rests with Russia.

Global warming alarmists, particularly in EU nations, continue to hold out hope Putin will disregard the advice of his chief economic advisor and ratify the treaty. However, Mikhail Delyagin, a former economic advisor for Putin, stated such an event was unlikely.

"The statement (by Illiaronov) confirms that Russia does not want to ratify the Kyoto Protocol," said Delyagin. "It does not mean that it is coming directly from Putin—maybe Mr. Putin is indifferent to this problem. But Mr. Illiaronov would never make a declaration that contradicts the president."

Konstantin Kosachev, head of the International Relations Committee of the Russian Duma (which also opposes the treaty), agreed with Illiaronov that Russia should reject Kyoto. Kosachev said that with economic powers such as the U.S., Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, India, and South Korea either exempt from or opposed to the treaty, the Russian government believes Russian participation in Kyoto would place it at an economic disadvantage.

Russia's leading scientists also have expressed doubt about the predictions of global warming alarmists, who cannot account for satellite data showing little or no global warming has thus far occurred, and whose computer models are so flawed as to grossly overstate current temperatures, let alone future temperatures. (See "Kyoto? Nyet!" *Environment & Climate News*, December 2003.)

With Putin's decision imminent, the EU will soon learn if its WTO threat will sway Putin one way or another.

James M. Taylor is managing editor of Environment & Climate News. His email address is taylor@heartland.org.

EU Nations Fail to Comply with Kyoto

by James M. Taylor

As the European Union (EU) uses World Trade Organization membership as a threat against Russia, evidence is mounting that the EU itself is failing to uphold its end of the Kyoto Protocol bargain.

One of President George W. Bush's chief objections to the protocol was that it was crafted in such a way as to make U.S. compliance more difficult and economically punitive than EU compliance. For example, the baseline year of 1990 was chosen to pre-date the transition of many European nations from coal to oil, natural gas, and nuclear power, for reasons unrelated to greenhouse gas emissions. The choice of 1990 also punished the U.S. for significantly greater economic and population growth, and therefore significantly more greenhouse gas emissions, than Europe managed during the 1990s.

Despite the crafting of a treaty highly favorable to EU nations, data from Germany, France, England, and other European nations show the EU itself is not abiding by the treaty it is attempting to foist onto Russia.

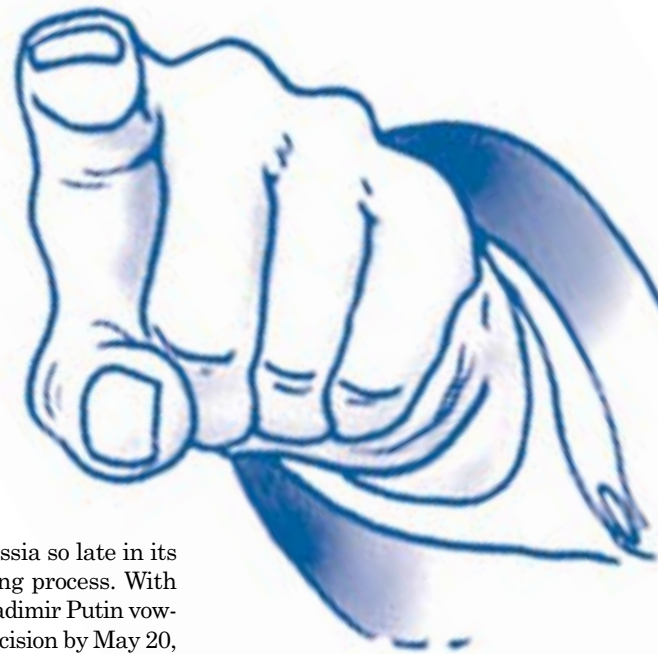
The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, a 30-nation economic partnership dominated by the EU, reported on April 5 that its member nations are failing to meet their Kyoto emissions targets.

Of particular significance, the British Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) reported on April 13 that stronger than expected economic growth "more characteristic of American society" will prevent the United Kingdom from complying with its Kyoto goals unless drastic changes are made to the British economy.

Claiming "there is no evidence" that England's "pattern of economic development is making people happier or giving them a better quality of life," the SDC is calling for a significant tax hike on already expensive British gasoline prices to stunt the economy and thereby reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Regardless of whether the British public ultimately accepts higher gasoline prices and economic stagnation as the price of adhering to the Kyoto Protocol, voters in the U.S., Russia, and other nations appear unlikely to down such bitter medicine to address a merely speculative harm.

James M. Taylor is managing editor of Environment & Climate News. His email address is taylor@heartland.org.



British Studies Show Prohibitive Cost of "Renewable" Energy

Wind power, other renewables twice as expensive as emissions-free nuclear power

by James M. Taylor

A pair of British studies released in March and April 2004 show relying on wind power or other non-nuclear "renewables" to reduce air pollution or carbon dioxide emissions forces consumers to pay at least twice as much as they currently pay for electricity generated from fossil fuels or emissions-free nuclear power.

Royal Academy

On March 10, the Royal Academy of Engineering released a study, "The Cost of Generating Electricity," comparing the costs of generating electricity from a number of energy sources. "The objective of this study," stated the Academy, "is to provide decision makers with simple, soundly based indicators of the cost performance for alternative electricity generation techniques. In order to make sensible decisions about energy policy, policy makers need to be able to compare the costs and benefits of different types of electricity generating technologies on a like for like basis."

According to the study, "The relationship between the cost of generating electrical power from various sources and the price that consumers pay is blurred by direct and indirect subsidies, market mechanisms, transmission, and distribution costs. The true costs of generating electrical power are often obscured by commercial sensitivities and competing claims that make the determination of sensible energy policy difficult and often imprecise."

After cutting through the hidden taxpayer subsidies and market constraints that frequently mask the true costs of electrical power generation, the Academy concluded, "Our cheapest electricity will come from gas turbines and nuclear stations, costing just 2.3 £/kWh (British pounds per kilowatt hour), compared with 3.7 £/kWh for onshore wind and 5.5 £/kWh for offshore wind farms."

"This may sound surprising, especially as we have included the cost of decommissioning in our assessment of the nuclear generation costs," said Academy Vice President Philip Ruffles, who served as chairperson for the study. "But modern nuclear stations are far simpler and more streamlined than the old generation and far cheaper to build and run."

Even fossil fuels were found by the Academy to be half as expensive as renewable energy sources—even after the Academy assigned a penalty to fossil fuel sources to take into account the costs of mitigating carbon dioxide emissions to a level required by the Kyoto Protocol, which Britain has pledged to support.

Hume Institute Touts Nuclear Power

A study titled "Tilting at Windmills," released April 18 by Scottish economist David Simpson of the David Hume Institute, bolstered the Royal Academy's findings. According to Simpson, generating electricity through wind power and other non-nuclear renewables costs twice as much as generating power from conventional sources.

Achieving the British government's goal of 20 percent of generation of energy through non-nuclear renewable sources, concluded Simpson, will cost British citizens well more than a billion dollars per year. Additionally, according to the study, "A serious attempt to address the issue of a reduction in CO2 emissions may raise wholesale electricity prices by up to 60 percent in five years."

The study noted, "No matter how large the wind power capacity, the variable nature of its output means it can make no significant contribution to security of energy supply."

Renewables Lobby Concedes Study's Accuracy

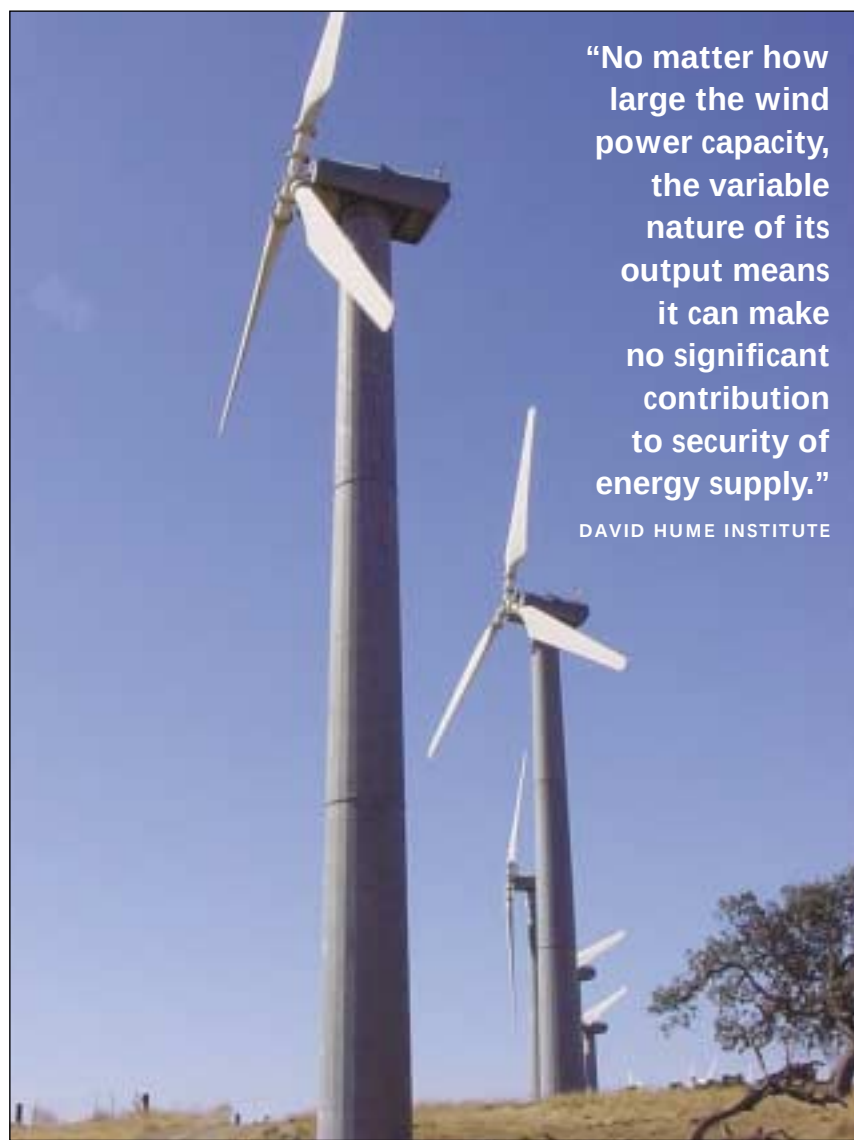
An association of renewable energy companies, Scottish Renewables, conceded in a written response published in *The Scotsman* that the Hume Institute study accurately reflected the annual costs of supplying power through renewable sources. The renewable energy association also conceded, "Because of the cost of providing additional stand-by generating capacity, it is unlikely wind power will ever account for more than 20 percent of electricity generation through the National Grid, and will make no substantial contribution to a reduction in carbon emissions."

"The government should take advantage of the renewables review coming up in 2005-6 to reconsider the nuclear option," wrote Simpson. "Nuclear power avoids extra costs, emits no greenhouse gases, and contributes to security of supply."

Analysts Note Environmental Consequences

Analysts noted economic costs are not the only costs associated with wind power. Many environmentalists oppose wind power because of the substantial number of birds slaughtered by turbine blades every year. In Northern California's Altamont Pass wind fields alone, thousands of birds are killed by wind turbines each year, including roughly 1,000 annual kills of such valued birds of prey as golden eagles, red-tailed hawks, and burrowing owls.

Property owners near turbine locations also oppose wind power because of sight and sound pollution. The size



"No matter how large the wind power capacity, the variable nature of its output means it can make no significant contribution to security of energy supply."

DAVID HUME INSTITUTE

of a single turbine tower and the large number of such turbines necessary to generate any measurable amount of electricity destroy any esthetic beauty of the turbine location, and the cumulative noise of the turbines is, report nearby residents, often unbearable.

"Wind power may well be the least environmentally friendly idea ever proposed by environmentalists," noted Iain Murray, a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute. "Conservationists as committed as Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Massachusetts) and British television personality Dr. David Bellamy have come out against proposed uses of the technology."

In addition to environmental concerns, new evidence suggests wind turbines may be contributing to human disease such as malaria and West Nile Virus spread by mosquitoes.

The American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) conceded in a recent press release that wind turbines are frequently killing bats that cannot detect or avoid the turbines. Acknowledged the AWEA, "Wind power providers found bats fatally collided with turbines in

West Virginia, Tennessee, Minnesota, and Wyoming last year. Bats play an important role as primary predators of night flying insects, including many major agricultural pests, and they pollinate plants and disperse seeds."

James M. Taylor is managing editor of Environment & Climate News. His email address is taylor@heartland.org.

INTERNET INFO

The Royal Academy of Engineering's March 10 study, "The Cost of Generating Electricity," is available online at http://www.raeng.org.uk/news/temp/cost_generation_report.pdf.

"Tilting at Windmills," the April 18 study issued by the David Hume Institute, is available online at <http://www.davidhumeinstitute.com/DHI%20Website/publications/hop/Wind%20Power%20paper.pdf>.

Washington Governor Signs Costly Global Warming Bill

by James M. Taylor

Washington Governor Gary Locke (D) on March 31 signed House Bill 3141, requiring new power plants planned in the state to offset or mitigate 20 percent of their expected carbon dioxide emissions. The law, which takes effect June 10, does not apply to existing plants.

Under the new law, companies hoping to build new power plants in the state will not be given the necessary permits to do so unless they agree to offset the plant's expected emissions.

Companies can comply with the new law by undertaking mitigation efforts such as planting trees (which sequester carbon dioxide), retrofitting diesel buses with cleaner-burning fuel, or investing in energy conservation.

Alternatively, companies can pay third parties approved by the state to undertake mitigation activities. Third parties must submit reports to the state and allow their mitigation efforts to be inspected and audited by the state.

Companies choosing the third-party option would pay at a rate of \$1.60 for each metric ton of carbon the new plant is expected to emit over 30 years. According to Allen Fiksdal, manager of the Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council, which lobbied hard for the bill's passage, a 650-megawatt power plant would be required to pay \$11.5 million to offset its carbon dioxide emissions. The new law provides the fee can be adjusted biennially, but the adjustment cannot exceed 50 percent of the current rate.

The Site Evaluation Council and state Department of Ecology are charged with drafting rules for implementing the new law.

Mixed Reaction

K.C. Golden, policy director for Climate Solutions, a regional advocacy group seeking to head off global warming before it is a proven concern, welcomed the governor's action but wanted more. "Further limits on global warming pollution from transportation and energy production will help us build healthier communities and a stronger economy," he said.

Most experts on economics and global warming, however, disagree. Greenhouse gas controls are likely to hurt, rather than help, a state's economy, they say, producing less-healthy communities as a result.

A recent study by The Heartland Institute, for example, found that if Washington State were to impose mandatory reductions in CO₂ similar to those contemplated by the Kyoto Protocol, the average Washington house-



"The environmental community could not get the U.S. Congress or the President to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, so now they are going state to state to promote their agenda. This type of legislation will hurt our state economies by higher energy prices."

REP. JEROME DELVIN (R-RICHLAND)

hold would pay more than \$5,300 per year in higher-priced goods and services and lost income. The state government could lose more than \$3.3 billion in tax revenue each year.

"By allowing third parties to mitigate

(read: trade) carbon dioxide emissions, Governor Locke is sanctioning the precursor to a carbon cartel," said Sandy Liddy Bourne, director of the American Legislative Exchange Council's Environment, Natural Resources, and



Washington Governor Gary Locke (D) signed a bill requiring new power plants planned in the state to offset or mitigate 20 percent of their expected carbon dioxide emissions.

Agriculture Task Force. "The bill establishes a 'finder's fee' to assist a company that wants to do business in Washington, take up to 50 percent of the mitigation credit, and ultimately raise the price of energy for the citizens of Washington with little to no environmental benefit.

"This is the Enron accounting methodology for improving air quality," Bourne said.

"I was very disappointed in my House colleagues for passing the legislation and not looking at the science instead of listening to the environmental lobbying propaganda," Rep. Jerome Delvin (R-Richland) told *Environment & Climate News*. "The environmental community could not get the U.S. Congress or the President to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, so now they are going state to state to promote their agenda. This type of legislation will hurt our state economies by higher energy prices," said Delvin, who serves on the House Technology, Telecommunications and Energy Committee and voted against the bill.

Power plant companies currently operating in the state also pointed out the bill could hurt the state's economy by discouraging them from making new investments. "We just see that as a disincentive to build new generation," said Dave Arbaugh, a spokesman for Calpine Corp., an independent power producer.

James M. Taylor is managing editor of *Environment & Climate News*. His email address is taylor@heartland.org.

INTERNET INFO

The Heartland Institute's February 2003 *Policy Study*, "State Greenhouse Gas Programs: An Economic and Scientific Analysis," is available online at <http://www.heartland.org/Article.cfm?artId=11559>. An analysis specific to Washington State is available at <http://www.heartland.org/Article.cfm?artId=11713>.

The American Legislative Exchange Council's report, "Sons of Kyoto: Greenhouse Gas Regulation in the States," is available from the ALEC Web site at <http://www.alec.org/meSWFiles/pdf/Sons%20of%20Kyoto.pdf>.

Rhode Island

Continued from page 1

Northeast, however, Carcieri has adopted a distinctly free-market approach to such policy-making. The governor has empowered citizens to decide for themselves how important those energy goals are.

Residents Can Choose

The Rhode Island State Energy Office has hired a New England-based marketing firm to promote a new program that allows residents to choose emissions-free renewable power. Through Narragansett Electric Company's GreenUpsm program, approved by the state Public Utilities Commission in February and launched on March 31, residents can choose to purchase none, half, or all of their power from wind and hydropower sources.

"If you feel strongly about it, and you want to pay the extra cost, it's there for you," said Michael F. Ryan, executive vice president of Narragansett Electric, one of the state's four electricity providers.

A Rhode Island household opting to purchase 50 percent of its power from renewable sources would pay electricity bills roughly 7 percent higher than they otherwise would be. A household purchasing 100 percent of its power from renewable sources would face electricity bills roughly 19 percent higher.

The program directly tests the claim, made by some environmental activists, that citizens would gladly pay extra to reduce greenhouse gas emissions if only given the opportunity to do so. By giving residents a choice, rather than mandating a particular energy source, the program allows citizens to vote about energy and the environment through their own individual actions.

Similar programs offered by electricity generators in other states have not proven popular. Only about 9,600 of 1.5 million eligible customers (less than 1 percent) have signed up for the renewable energy program offered by Niagara Mohawk to New York residents. Similarly, Massachusetts Electric allows residents to purchase emissions-free electricity, but only about 1,790 of 1.2 million eligible customers have enrolled.

Low participation rates have caused some activist groups to criticize Carcieri's decision to give Rhode Island residents the power to choose their energy sources. Those groups would prefer the state mandate the use of renewable power.



Rhode Island Governor Don Carcieri (R) has empowered citizens to decide for themselves how important energy goals are.

"There are easy steps that could be easily implemented, and the governor could throw his support behind them," said Kate Canada, an advocate for the Rhode Island Public Research Group (PIRG). Such steps would include requiring Ocean State residents to buy their household energy from renewable sources and purchase emissions-reduction technology for their automobiles.

Mandates Would Be Costly

The mandates sought by PIRG and others would be costly. According to a recent study by The Heartland Institute, a state-specific version of the Kyoto Protocol would cost the average Rhode Island household more than \$4,500 per year in higher-priced goods and services and lost income. The Rhode Island state government could lose more than \$370 million in tax revenue each year.

Even those figures represent only the tip of the economic iceberg, according to supporters of mandatory CO2 reductions. Jan Reitsma, a former director of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management and a leading voice among Rhode Island CO2 activists, told the *Providence Journal* Kyoto-style emissions cuts would be only a "first step" toward even more stringent future CO2 reductions.

"States should reject every form of Kyoto legislation for the very same reasons Kyoto was rejected by our leaders in Washington DC," observed Sandy Liddy Bourne, director of the American Legislative Exchange Council's Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture Task Force. "The Kyoto

Protocol is just another highly regressive energy tax on America's working families, with no measurable benefit to environmental or human health."

Leading by Example

In addition to promoting the voluntary program to purchase emissions-free electricity, Carcieri has pledged the state will purchase much of its own power from emissions-free sources.

On March 31, Carcieri announced the state would purchase renewable energy certificates to generate 100 percent of the electricity used at the State House for five years. That program will cost Rhode Island taxpayers roughly \$210,000 more than they would have paid to power the State House through conventional energy sources.

"Governor Carcieri is supportive of increasing, substantially, the amount of renewable energy by 2020," said Carcieri spokesman Jeff Neal.

According to Neal, Carcieri recognizes that programs designed to reduce CO2 emissions come at a cost, and that the benefits of such programs are not certain.

"It's very difficult to quantify exactly what the benefits will be," said Neal, "and more importantly, what the costs would be to utility rate payers." That's why the governor won't mandate the use of renewable energy sources—the benefits are too uncertain to justify a mandate.

James M. Taylor is managing editor of Environment & Climate News. His email address is taylor@heartland.org.



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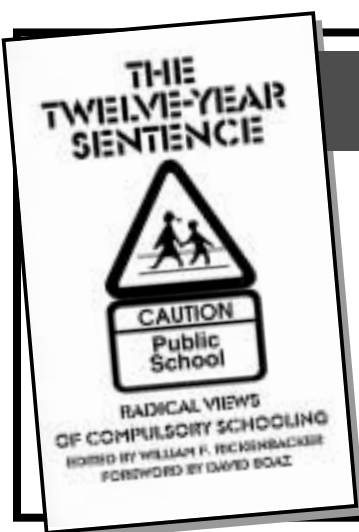
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Polls Show Little Interest in Green Agenda

Environment in eighth place on list of voter concerns

by James M. Taylor

American voters are generally happy with the condition of their local environment and the performance of their elected representatives on environment issues, according to several recent public opinion polls. As a result, the polls show, environment issues rank near the bottom of concerns for American voters this election season.

Gallup: It's the Economy

According to Gallup's annual Earth Day poll, 35 percent of Americans fret over the current state of the environment. The number of Americans who worry a "great deal" or "fair amount" about the environment has dropped 15 points since Gallup's 2001 poll.

According to Gallup, fewer than half of poll respondents felt environmental protection should take priority over economic matters. A "record low proportion of Americans have chosen environmental protection over economic growth," reported Gallup.

Gallup's Lydia Saad, one of the architects of the Earth Day poll, noted, "for whatever reason, the public doesn't see the environment worsening, and that's why it's not getting a lot of attention."

On a list of nine concerns poll respondents were asked to consider, the environment came in a distant eighth place, ahead of only race relations. Concerns such as health care, crime, drugs, domestic terror threats, the economy, immigration, unemployment, homelessness, and energy prices all ranked as more important than environment issues.

According to the Gallup poll, Americans have mixed views of President George W. Bush's environmental performance, with approval and disapproval ratings largely mirroring party affiliation. Forty-one percent of poll respondents stated Bush is doing a "good job" handling environment issues, while 46 percent said he is doing a "poor job."

Bush's numbers, while respectable for a Republican President, reflect a gradual slide in his environmental rating. Bush received a 49 percent approval rating for his efforts on environment issues in April 2001, shortly after taking office, and his approval rating has slid roughly three percentage points per year in each year since.

Nevertheless, with the public generally pleased with the current quality of the environment, Gallup reports, "the relatively moderate decline in Bush's environmental ratings suggest he is not especially vulnerable at this point."

AEI Finds Voters Indifferent

On April 14, the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) released a study examining the results of several recent environmental polls. Those polls confirm the Gallup findings.

According to AEI study author Karlyn Bowman, the environment ranks near the bottom of the public's list of priorities. This is true even among younger voters, historically the most passionate about environment issues.

Bowman reports voters take into account Bush's handling of environment issues far less often than they consider his performance on economic issues. Only 9 percent of voters participating in exit

"On a list of nine concerns poll respondents were asked to consider, the environment came in a distant eighth place ..."

polls during the 2000 elections rated the environment as one of their top two voting issues. Moreover, according to Bowman, election day exit polls consistently find "only small numbers" of voters identify the environment as the most important factor in their voting decision. Those voters consistently vote Democratic, according to Bowman.

"In early 2004, as several polls in this document show, the environment is not an issue on the front burner for most Americans," Bowman observed. "Other issues such as the performance of the economy and the war on terrorism loom larger."

Importantly, most Americans are satisfied with the condition of the environment in their local community. Reported Bowman, "In October 2003, 70 percent told Harris Interactive interviewers that they felt good about the quality of the air, water, and environment in which they lived and worked." Others polls have

INTERNET INFO

More information on Gallup's Earth Day poll is available to subscribers of the Gallup Poll Tuesday Briefing at <http://www.gallup.com/content/login.aspx?ci=11380>.

The American Enterprise Institute's "Polls on the Environment" report, one of a series of *AEI Studies in Public Opinion*, is available online at http://www.aei.org/docLib/20040407_Environment2.pdf.

confirmed voters are more concerned about safeguarding the condition of their local economy than they are about advancing the agenda of environmental activist groups.

Nature Conservancy Strikes Out

An April 2004 poll conducted by the Nature Conservancy reported fewer than half of Americans agree with much of the group's anti-growth agenda. For example, fewer than half of Americans believe their communities are growing too fast, and fewer than half believe not enough land is being preserved for environmental purposes.

Those results surprised many environmental activist groups, especially since the Nature Conservancy itself authored the poll questions and was able to "spin" the language and context in order to achieve favorable results.

Similarly, activist groups were disappointed with Gallup's findings regarding greenhouse gases. While an overwhelming majority of respondents stated they were familiar with global warming theory, few respondents were greatly worried about the pessimistic claims of global warming alarmists. Only 51 percent of respondents claimed to be worried even as much as "a fair amount" about global warming.

"Last year at this time," said Gallup's Saad, "Gallup reported that global warming was 'a bit of a yawn' to most Americans. Today, one might say the public is practically dozing."

James M. Taylor is managing editor of Environment & Climate News. His email address is taylor@heartland.org.

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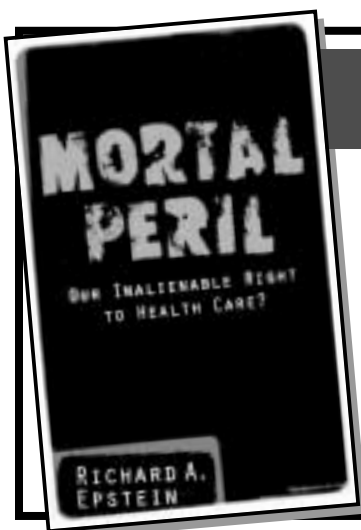
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Experts

Continued from page 1

must stop trying to protect our planet from every imaginable, exaggerated, or imaginary risk. And we must stop trying to protect it on the backs, and the graves, of the nation's and world's most powerless and impoverished people."

Innis spoke at a briefing about the negative implications of "eco-imperialism"—policies that speaker after speaker said seek to protect the environment, but deny impoverished people the chance for better lives. "We intend to make this Earth Day a clarion call for human rights and more responsible environmentalism," Innis said.

Dr. C.S. Prakash, professor of plant genetics at Tuskegee Institute and a native of Bangalore, India, agreed. "We need to put humanity back into the environmental picture and promote policies that demonstrate as much concern about people, as about the environment."

All over the world, nations are trying to emerge from poverty, he said, by generating more electrical energy, increasing their agricultural output, and eradicating the diseases that have plagued them for centuries. But they are often prevented from doing so by developed countries and activist groups that claim such activities might adversely impact wildlife and environmental values.

DDT, Biotech Key

Environmental pressure groups, wealthy foundations, and even the United Nations and World Health Organization oppose the use of DDT and other pesticides to control malaria. The disease afflicts 300 million people every year, killing 2 million—mostly women and children, and mostly in sub-Saharan Africa—and leaving the region one of the most destitute on Earth.

DDT's critical role in the battle against malaria was conclusively demonstrated by South Africa, which reintroduced the chemical in 2000—and slashed malaria disease and death rates by more than 90 percent in just three years, noted American Enterprise Institute fellow Dr. Roger Bate. "DDT has never harmed a single human being," he emphasized, "and any damage to wildlife occurred when massive amounts were employed in farming, not when small doses were employed for disease control."

Environmental activists deprive poor countries of electricity, denying them lights, refrigeration, better jobs, and modern schools, clinics, and hospitals. As a result, millions die from tuberculosis, dysentery, and other diseases. Opposition to biotechnology perpetuates malnutrition, prevents Third World farmers from replacing crops that have been devastated by disease and drought, and results in extensive erosion and habitat loss.

"Eco-imperialism is clearly a pervasive problem in the United States, too," said John Meredith, a member of Project 21. "It imposes policies that drive up housing prices, prevent the cleanup of polluted

brownfields, stifle job creation in minority neighborhoods, and keep poor people impoverished. The policies promote a narrow political agenda and fail to give the poor a voice in these decisions."

These activists practice "eco-segregation," said Norris McDonald, president of the African American Environmentalist Association. "Ninety percent of elitist environmental groups do not hire African Americans in professional policy positions, and they promote numerous policies that are detrimental to the African-American community."

"Ineffective actions taken to prevent climate change will significantly increase energy prices for poor Americans and Europeans, making it even more difficult for many to afford heating and air conditioning," noted Dr. Sallie Baliunas, an astrophysicist and science host of TechCentralStation.com. "Unfounded fears about global warming are also used to justify policies that prevent poor Africans, Indians, Asians, and Peruvians from using fossil fuels to generate electricity, thus forcing them to keep using wood and animal dung for fuel."

Matter of Conscience

While these experts met with the press in Washington, Greenpeace cofounder and coalition member Dr. Patrick Moore promoted his message of "sensible environmentalism" in New York City's Central Park.

"I helped start the environmental movement to protect people, as well as

our planet," he said. "Unfortunately, too many policies today ignore the needs of the Earth's poorest people. That's not just unnecessary. It's eco-imperialism. It's counter-productive, and morally wrong."

Following their Press Club event, the panelists also briefed congressional staffers. In both venues, they underscored the need to hold environmental pressure groups to the same standards of honesty, integrity, transparency, and accountability that we demand of for-profit corporations and their officers. "No one should be above the law, or free to ignore basic ethical principles," Meredith explained.

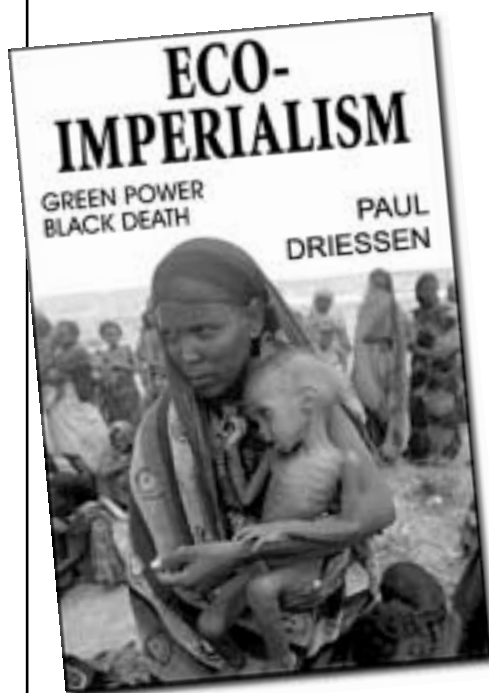
Basic standards of ethics, corporate social responsibility, and environmental justice require that we no longer ignore the "horrendous toll" exacted on poor people by these well-intended but ill-considered policies, the policy experts emphasized.

"If people of conscience join us, we will challenge and end this scourge of eco-imperialism," Innis concluded, "and ensure that Dr. Martin Luther King's dream will become a reality for poor people throughout the United States and world."

Paul Driessen is a senior fellow with the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow and Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise, nonprofit public policy institutes that focus on energy, the environment, economic development, and international affairs. He is author of Eco-Imperialism: Green Power—Black Death. His email address is pdriessen@cox.rr.com.

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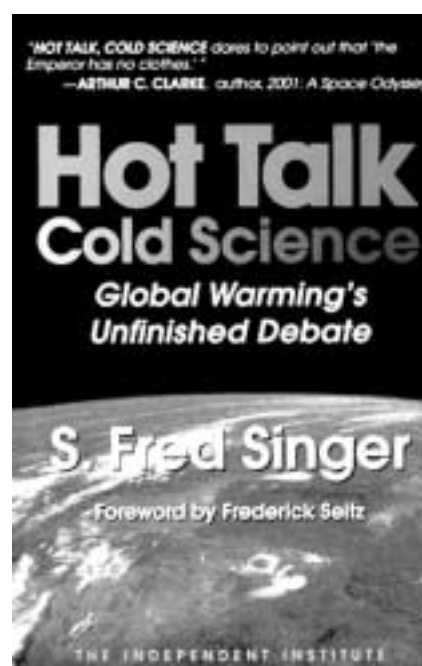
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Earth Day Activists Ignore Progress

by Steven Milloy

Environmental activists launched the annual Earth Day ritual in 1970 to bemoan the "havoc" wreaked on Earth by humans.

Thirty-four years later, environmental activists still rant and rave about what we "bad" people do to the "good" Earth. And, of course, politics are never very far behind, especially in an election year. On a campaign stop for John Kerry in Tampa, Florida, Clinton-era Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) head Carol Browner labeled the Bush administration the "worst ever" on environmental issues.

Got to Admit, It's Getting Better

The good news, however, is that the bad news is wrong, according to the *2004 Index of Leading Environmental Indicators* just released by the Pacific Research Institute and the American Enterprise Institute. Here are some examples:

- Average vehicle emissions are dropping about 10 percent per year as the fleet turns over to cleaner vehicles, including SUVs.
- Auto emissions of nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds are down 67 percent since 1985, according to EPA data.
- The percentage of the U.S. population served by water systems with no reported violations of regulatory standards rose from 79 percent to 94 percent between 1993 and 2002.
- Private efforts such as Ducks Unlimited

have successfully conserved habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife.

■ "Toxic" chemical releases have declined by 55 percent since 1988, while industry output has increased by 40 percent thanks to productivity gains and technological improvements.

Bush Record Is Sound

Contrary to Browner's comments on behalf of John Kerry, the Bush administration has made progress on the environment.

First and foremost, Bush got us out of that disastrous global warming treaty, negotiated by the Clinton administration, known as the Kyoto Protocol. The major reductions in energy use that would have been required to meet the treaty's goals would have spelled economic disaster.

What's economics got to do with the environment? That's simple. The only reason we can afford the burdensome costs imposed on us by stringent environmental regulation—for example, wastewater discharged by industrial facilities must be much cleaner than upon intake, if not absolutely pristine—is because we are such a wealthy society. And we will need all the wealth we can lay our hands on if we are to keep appeasing environmental activists through costly regulation.

Next, as the western wildfire season approaches, we should remember it was Bush who signed into law last December provisions that will help reduce the threat of cat-

astrophic forest fires. Thanks in part to environmentalist opposition to the thinning of underbrush, more than 700,000 acres burned last year in California alone. Twenty people were killed and more than 2,600 homes were destroyed. Wildfires burned nearly seven million acres in 2002, killing 23 firefighters, destroying more than 800 homes, and costing taxpayers more than \$1.5 billion.

If you are one of those misguided souls who still believes trace amounts of various substances in the air and water are dangerous to your health, remember it was during the first year of the Bush administration that the arsenic-in-drinking-water standard was made more stringent. Bush has also, for the first time ever, proposed a plan for reducing mercury emissions from power plants. Browner had eight years to do these things but didn't.

Diminishing Returns?

There's no question we've made a lot of progress in environmental protection since the first Earth Day and we continue to do so, as evidenced by the *2004 Index of Leading Environmental Indicators*. There are a couple things to keep in mind, however.

At the time of the first Earth Day in 1970, human activity affecting the environment was essentially unregulated, as compared with today's vast array of laws and regulations. We have been able to make great progress in reducing undesirable environmental impact because we started from scratch and then put tremendous resources into the effort.

But now, in many if not most areas of

environmental protection, we have reached the point of diminishing returns. We must look hard to see whether we are producing real benefits for the costs incurred.

Sure, we *can* produce drinking water virtually without arsenic ... but *should* we? Why bear the costs if no one is being harmed by current arsenic levels? And yes, we can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, but why risk shattering our economy if we're not certain humans are adversely impacting global climate?

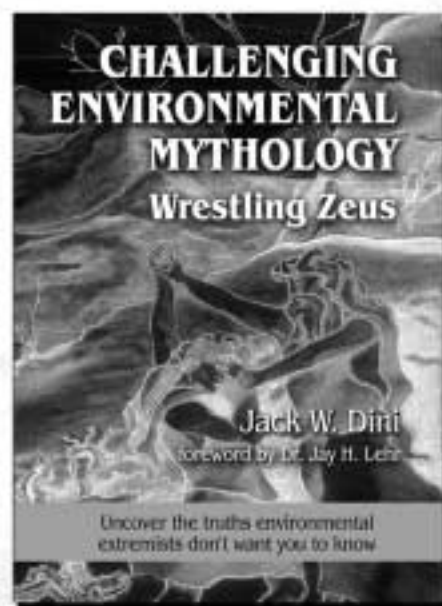
Rather than thoughtless, feel-good Earth Day celebrations ceaselessly calling for more burdensome command-and-control-type environmental regulations, a more rational approach is needed.

Let's make sure Earth Day over-exuberance doesn't lead to an economic Dearth Day.

Steven Milloy is the publisher of JunkScience.com, an adjunct scholar at the Cato Institute, and author of Junk Science Judo: Self-Defense Against Health Scares and Scams. His email address is milloy@cais.com.

INTERNET INFO

The *2004 Index of Leading Environmental Indicators* is available online at the Pacific Research Institute's Center for Environmental Studies, <http://www.pacificresearch.org/centers/ces/index.html>.



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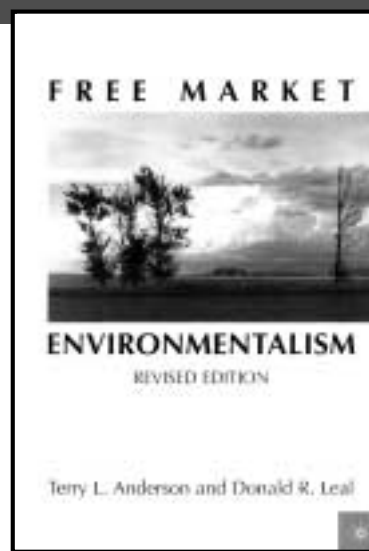
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Alaska

Continued from page 1

State and federal legislators from Alaska have expressed overwhelming support for ANWR resource recovery but have been frustrated by a block of East Coast Senators claiming to be better at managing Alaskan lands than Alaska residents themselves.

The state also will open up for resource recovery another 670,000 acres of state-managed lands near the federally managed National Petroleum Reserve. Environmental activist groups have sued the federal government in an attempt to stop oil production in the Reserve. (See "Activist Groups Sue to Stop Oil Production in National Petroleum Reserve," *Environment & Climate News*, May 2004.) The suit, filed in February, claims the interests of caribou and other animals must take priority over oil production. Activist groups filed the suit despite the fact that the Reserve, an Indiana-sized area of land approximately 100 miles from ANWR, was specifically set aside by the federal government in 1923 for oil production.

The roughly 1 million acres of land near ANWR and the National Petroleum Reserve are but a small portion of the state-managed lands Alaska is opening for production. Responding to its citizens' economic hardship and the shortage of production resulting from ANWR restrictions, the Alaskan state government is considering many additional state-managed North Slope lands for resource recovery. Under consideration are Bristol Bay, a portion of the Bering Sea recently freed from a federal drilling moratorium; 33 million acres of the Chuckchi Sea; 25 million acres of Norton Sound; and 2.5 million acres of the lower Cook Inlet.

Explained Governor Frank Murkowski (R), "America should not be held hostage by Middle East oil imports. Motorists should not have to pay more than \$2 for a gallon of gasoline. Alaska oil, Alaska natural gas, can help balance that equation."

Voter Backlash Against Extremists

By making state lands more friendly for natural resource recovery, Alaskan legislators are hoping to avoid a political backlash for the economic harms caused by federal prohibitions on recovery. At the federal level, Republican Senator Lisa Murkowski (the governor's daughter) is facing a serious re-election threat from former Governor Tony Knowles (D), who argues Murkowski has been ineffective at persuading her fellow senators to allow sufficient resource recovery in ANWR and other Alaska lands.

With polls showing more than 70 percent of Alaskans favor ANWR resource recovery, political experts and campaign officials for both parties recognize that, according to the Greenwire environmental news service, "the candidate that can convince voters he will do the best job of bringing additional energy development to the state could gain the upper hand in the election."

Observed Greenwire, "The Knowles campaign has argued that what Alaskans need in the Senate is a Democrat who



Alaska's GOP Senator, Lisa Murkowski (above), wants voters to believe she will be a more capable advocate of responsible resource recovery than her Democratic rival, former Governor Tony Knowles (left). Some political observers say resource recovery will be the decisive issue in the race.

will convince other members of his party to vote for ANWR exploration."

"[Knowles'] belief is that Alaska is much better off with a senator in both parties," said Knowles campaign manager Bob King. "There's a lot more promise on the Democratic side for changing votes, simply because there are more votes that can be changed."

Murkowski responds that Knowles is closely aligned with the very Democrats responsible for blocking ANWR energy development. Adding another Democrat to the Senate, argues the Murkowski

Murkowski race turns out, both campaigns clearly understand the candidate who is seen as the most capable advocate of responsible resource recovery is the candidate who will win the election.

Resource Recovery Touted in Other States

The political rewards of promoting responsible resource recovery are evident this election year in the lower 48 states, as well.

In Montana, Republican candidates appealed to a standing-room-only crowd at a gubernatorial debate by contrasting

Wyoming State Rep. Randall Luthi (R). "Dear God, give us another boom and we promise not to waste it." With the assistance of a pro-recovery economic environment, Wyoming's prayers are being answered.

Not so, lately, in Montana. With regulations influenced by the anti-development agenda of environmental activist groups, the state is facing a likely deficit this year. The projected deficit is especially painful considering the state's low per-capita income.

The four Republican candidates for Montana governor received thunderous applause for pledging to restore more balance to the state's energy and environment regulations.

"(Montana is) the Treasure State," asserted Secretary of State Bob Brown. "Even though we're the poorest state in per-capita income, we're the richest in resource wealth."

Recognizing that modern technology allows natural resources to be recovered in an environmentally sensitive manner is essential to preserving the economic future of Montana's children, noted Brown.

"Montanans want leadership to have a 'can do' attitude," added Billings businessman Pat Davison, who also is running for governor. "We're sick and tired of people telling us we can't do things."

Davison blasted environmental activists "back East" for interfering with state policy and making it impossible for Montana citizens to benefit from their rich natural resources.

"We [in Montana] are environmentalists in many ways," Davison emphasized. "We enjoy the pristine lands, we enjoy the clean air and the clean water. We know that we can produce, and yet maintain a quality of life. We have the opportunity to take back Montana from extreme environmental groups."

Candidate Tom Keating agreed that resource recovery can work in conjunction with environmental awareness. Keating received enthusiastic applause when he observed, "for about 100 years, we've logged, mined, drilled oil and gas, and produced coal. And we still had a beautiful environment."

Keating noted Montana's economic problems began when legislation favored by activist groups gave obstructionists a free hand to challenge economic development.

"The Montana Environmental Policy Act," said Keating, "is what environmentalists use to take the state to court and stop new investment throughout the state. I'm calling for a repeal of [such] acts."

Former state legislator Ken Miller worried his children may have to leave Montana for lack of an economic future.

"They love this state as much as I do," Miller said. "But I'm not sure they're going to have opportunities to stay here."

Miller said that rather than forcing citizens to choose between the environment and the economy, the state should promote resource recovery and economic development that works hand-in-hand with environmental stewardship. "I believe we can have our cake and eat it too," he said.

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"On March 31, [Alaska] announced it will offer 350,000 acres of new offshore leases for oil and gas recovery in an area adjacent to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR)."

campaign, rewards and gives more power to the obstructionist Democratic caucus.

"Alaskan voters want to know, 'Tony Knowles, who are you going to support when you go to the ballot box? Are you going to support John Kerry and his anti-Alaskan message ... or are you going to support President Bush who has worked for a long time to open up ANWR,'" said Murkowski campaign manager Justin Stiefel.

Regardless of how the Knowles-

the state's foundering economy with the booming economy of neighboring Wyoming. Wyoming state officials project \$1.2 billion more in 2004 state tax revenues than previously forecast, largely a result of the state's successful natural gas industry. For a state with a \$5 billion annual budget, the unexpected gain of more than \$1 billion was music to the ears of citizens and legislators.

"There's a prayer around here," said

EDITORIAL

Obesity a Thin Excuse for Supersizing Federal Land Grabs



by James M. Taylor

During the 2000 Congressional session, and again during the 2001 session, a group of big-government federal lawmakers attempted one of the largest and most expensive land grabs in history. Designated the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA), the measure would have required the federal government to spend more than \$3 billion each and every year to buy private land and remove it, in the name of "conservation," from the control of private citizens.

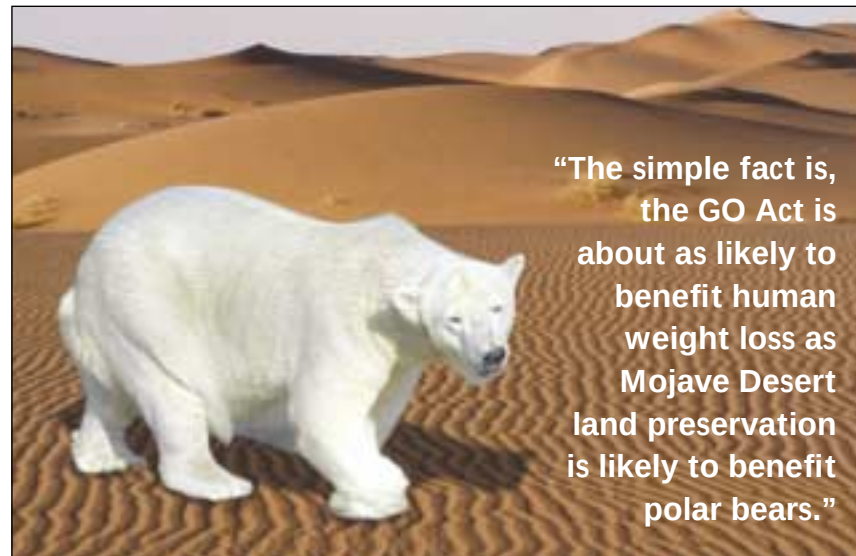
After the House approved CARA in 2000, the bill stalled in the Senate. The legislation was redrafted in 2001 but generated less enthusiasm than it had the year before. CARA was, it seemed, as dead as the Soviet collective farm system.

Enough Is Enough

Why did CARA die? Opposition to the bill grew as the taxpaying public learned the federal government already owns 40 percent of the land in this country. Environmental activist groups will always claim some astounding environmental significance for whatever piece of land they happen to want the government to purchase and remove from private citizens. But when the government has already cherry-picked the most desirable 40 percent of the country, just how astoundingly important can the remaining 60 percent be?

The public also learned that the federal government by its own admission has mismanaged the national parks, forests, and wilderness areas it already owns. In times of record federal budget deficits and more pressing social concerns, the American people were reluctant to spend an additional \$3 billion each year to purchase, and then turn over to the fumbling federal bureaucracy, still more acreage.

People got fed up with the notion that taxpayers ought to buy land for environmental activist groups. Why won't those groups buy the land themselves? The Sierra Club alone, for example, has more than \$80 million in assets, in addi-



"The simple fact is, the GO Act is about as likely to benefit human weight loss as Mojave Desert land preservation is likely to benefit polar bears."

tion to the tens of millions of dollars it raises and spends every year. Multiply this by the multitude of similar activist groups, such as the Nature Conservancy, Defenders of Wildlife, etc., and it becomes clear environmental groups should buy and preserve themselves whatever land they deem most valuable.

Now Here's a Stretch

But give credit to the champions of big-government: They will never miss an opportunity to grab a larger piece of America for control by government.

Taking advantage of studies showing 20 percent of Americans are "obese" (typ-

ically defined as a rather modest 20 percent above a ridiculously slender "ideal" body weight), the federal land-grabbers twisted the findings to suit their own ends and swung into action. Old CARA activists have re-created it, virtually word for word, and now call it the Get Outdoors (GO) Act.

Unbelievable, isn't it? But it's true. "Obesity is a public health crisis of the first order, and the Get Outdoors Act is a sensible way to help mitigate that public health crisis," said Congressman George Miller (D-California), House co-sponsor of the bill.

The GO Act will flood with money such programs as the Historic Preservation Fund and endangered species recovery. Is a walking tour through an eighteenth

century plantation really an effective weight-loss activity? Does taking thousands of acres infested by kangaroo rats and ruling it off limits to humans make humans more likely to lose weight?

The simple fact is, the GO Act is about as likely to benefit human weight loss as Mojave Desert land preservation is likely to benefit polar bears.

Obesity "Epidemic"

Only 20 percent of Americans are considered obese, and that's by the stringent standards set by the federal government's Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The majority

of obese Americans, according to the CDC, are over the age of 50.

Americans, and especially elderly Americans, tend to be obese because we can afford to be. We have accumulated the wealth and disposable income to treat ourselves to healthy portions of the food we like. Most of the world's people do not have that luxury.

We deliberately choose, especially as we get older, to spend a great deal of our time enjoying activities that may not involve physical exertion. We go on cruises with all-you-can-eat midnight buffets; we watch rather than participate in sporting events, sit in theaters, and stroll through art galleries and shopping malls. We sit at our computers for hours at a time chatting online with friends and

family. We camp out on the couch and tune in our satellite dish to watch virtually any movie or live sporting event the planet has to offer.

It's not that Americans are overweight because we are imprisoned in our homes with no place to exercise. Any one of us can stroll around the block, jog through the neighborhood, or bike all we want on local roadways, parks, and trails. We are overweight because we willingly and happily make lifestyle choices that bring us little exercise but great pleasure.

Does anybody actually believe Americans are overweight because the government owns only 40 percent, rather than 50 or 60 percent, of the entire U.S. landmass? If people don't use the available 40 percent for weight loss, exercise, and recreation, by what logic will we suddenly begin to use the additional and less appealing 10 or 20 percent the environmentalists also want the federal government to buy?

Wouldn't it be cheaper—and more effective—to buy every American his or her choice of a treadmill, weight bench, basketball, Jane Fonda workout tape, or pair of jogging shoes, instead?

Follow the Money

If we are looking for a motive for the GO Act, above and beyond the usual big-government motivation of so many radical environmentalists, we need only consider the main beneficiaries of the bill. Not surprisingly, federal money will be pumped disproportionately to the states of the two House co-sponsors: Don Young (R-Alaska) and the aforementioned George Miller (D-California).

If the true purpose of the GO Act is to fight obesity, why are funds being spent disproportionately in Alaska, where the government already owns most of the land, where hardly anybody lives, and where it's often too cold to exercise outside, and in California, where the government already owns most of the land and where obesity is far less of a problem than in other regions of the country?

Ask your friends, colleagues, and family members how much American land the government should own. I guarantee most will give you a figure much less than 40 percent. Ask yourself, how much land is enough?

And then, ask your elected officials that same question, and demand a concrete answer.

James M. Taylor is managing editor of Environment & Climate News. His email address is taylor@heartland.org.

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